

# Modern Jazz Tuba Project

## “Jazz At The Bottom Line”

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*“The Modern Jazz Tuba Project is exceptional by any standard. Rich Matteson arrangements catch fire, the horns flex like alto saxophones on a bebop trip, the rhythm section cooks, even the tortuous ‘Blue Rondo A La Turk’ fails to stop the progress of these consummate musicians. In competent hands the ballads are always going to be warm and graceful, but add the beautifully written section backgrounds and you immediately appreciate that these are classic sounds. There is no novelty value here, this is a marvelous jazz project and you’d be wise to seek it out.*

—John Killoch of *Mainlybigbands.com*

The Modern Jazz Tuba Project is a ten-piece modern jazz group consisting of professional jazz musicians, primarily based in Nashville, Tennessee. The MJT Project has produced two critically acclaimed recordings (*Live at the Bottom Line* Heartdance Music HDM 1090 and *Favorite Things* Heartdance Music HDM 1120). The group has presented performances at the Great American Brass Band Festival in Danville, Kentucky, the U.S. Army Band Tuba Conference in Washington, D.C., the Midwest International Band and Orchestra Clinic in Chicago, the International Tuba Conference, and state music conferences in Tennessee, Florida and Texas and other jazz venues.

The Modern Jazz Tuba Project presents an exciting new approach to contemporary music. With six low brass instrumentalists and a four-piece rhythm section, the MJT Project builds upon over fifty years

of tradition utilizing the euphonium and tuba as lead instruments in jazz. This tradition started in the late 1940s with “the birth of the cool” and the collaboration between Miles Davis and Bill Barber on a number of recordings arranged by Gil Evans, and was extended through the 1950s by Harvey Phillips (the Sauter-Finegan Orchestra, Gil Evans, etc.) and Don Butterfield (Clark Terry, Dizzy Gillespie, Charles Mingus and others).

By the late 1950s, bands were actually fronted by tubists such as Ray Draper (with “sideman” John Coltrane!) and Red Callender. In the late 1960s tubist Howard Johnson began his work with the Gil Evans Orchestra and with blues artist Taj Mahal, which led to the formation of the first jazz tuba ensemble, “Gravity,” in 1968. Famous jazz euphoniumist Rich Matteson, along with tubist Harvey Phillips, continued exploring ensemble possibilities through the formation

of the internationally acclaimed Matteson-Phillips TUBAJAZZ CONSORT in the mid-1970s. The MJT Project is an outgrowth of these traditions.

Utilizing the talents of three outstanding jazz euphoniumists—Billy Huber and Barry Green of Nashville and Marcus Dickman of Jacksonville, Florida—and balancing the low end with tubists Joe Murphy and Winston Morris of Tennessee and Richard Perry of Hattiesburg, Mississippi, the MJT Project explores the best in jazz tuba literature. The rhythm section personnel are all first-call Nashville-based musicians who

have performed and recorded with just about everybody in the music business with Steve Willets on keys, Paul Binkley on guitar, Jim Ferguson on bass and Bob Mater on drums.

Repertoire for this new and exciting group ranges from lush ballads to uptempo bebop, and everything in between. The group is available for festivals, conferences, club engagements, and other appropriate venues. For more information, visit their web site at [www.mjtproject.com](http://www.mjtproject.com).

**Watch for a clinic by  
The Modern Jazz  
Tuba Project at the  
TBA Convention/Clinic  
this summer.  
The MJT Project is  
produced by  
R. Winston Morris  
and Joe Murphy.**